

# PHOTO STORY OF THE GREATEST FLOOD OF THE CENTURY

MARCH 17-19, 1936



PRICE 25 Cents

164 SCENES OF PITTSBURGH DISTRICT



# Chronology of Frightful Week of Flood

## MONDAY

Heavy rains that fell in Western Pennsylvania sent the five main rivers that flow toward the Ohio creeping up their banks. Melting snow added to the torrents in the Red Bank Creek, the Kiskiminetas, the Conemaugh, the Youghiogheny, the Monongahela and the Allegheny.

## TUESDAY

From Johnstown came word that the roaring waters in the Conemaugh River and Stony Creek threatened the city. The flood rose to 18 feet in the business district, swamping hundreds of cars. At least 15,000 persons were trapped overnight in their homes.

Fifteen died and property damage was estimated at \$25,000,000.

## WEDNESDAY

Terror gripped the city as the flood surged about office buildings downtown and homes in the North Side. Deaths mounted every hour. Houses were swept loose from their foundations.

Power went off all over Pittsburgh. Phone lines went down. Fires broke out all over the district.

In Verona, Oakmont, Sharpsburg, Etna and other towns up the Allegheny, men, women and children fled screaming from their homes as the water relentlessly swept higher and higher.

Boats cruised about streets rescuing marooned families.

At 9 p. m., after remaining stationary at 46 feet, the water slowly began to subside.

## THURSDAY

Pittsburgh awoke to face the most devastating wreckage that ever marred the face of the city. Business was at a standstill. Relief crews herded thousands of homeless victims to refugee stations. Bodies were found hourly among the ruins. The known dead were more than 30, the injured more than 300 and rapidly increasing. The downtown section was under martial law. Churches, clubs and public buildings were crowded with dazed survivors. Tales of tragedy and heroism poured in from all over the flood zone. Work gangs toiled to set the city's power and 'phone lines in order. Traffic jammed at main corners because all police were on flood duty. Fire that had broken out Tuesday in the Waverly Oil Works in Lawrenceville still roared. Exhausted police and firemen and other exposure victims poured into the city's hospitals. Council appropriated \$1,000,000 for flood relief.

## FRIDAY

Faucets were dry in a number of homes throughout the city. Phone service was partially restored as the utility company brought in generators to supplement the small amount of current provided by the power companies. The "Bottoms" in McKees Rocks was threatened as a number of children in the refugee stations were stricken by scarlet fever and whooping cough. The Brilliant Pumping Station resumed operations.

## SATURDAY

A heavy snowfall harrassed relief workers and added to the misery of the homeless. Fires continued to break out in homes all over Pittsburgh. Seventy-five persons who succumbed to contagious diseases were isolated in a temporary hospital set up in the Eagles Club in McKees Rocks. The water shortage still spread distress in various parts of town. Most of the city's phones were back in working order, although the power shortage was still acute.

Coast Guardsmen patrolled the rivers in boats, helping the police and relief crews. The number of known dead was 56, the number of injured more than 400.

## SUNDAY

Lights burned in a number of homes that had been dark since Wednesday. Phone service was almost back to normal. Street cars were operating on most routes. One elevator came to the relief of harried guests of the William Penn Hotel, who had climbed the stairs since Wednesday. The number of known dead rose to 62. Trains were back on regular schedules. Militiamen were still on guard downtown and in other districts where they had been requested to guard against looters. Warnings were still on the air to the public to be on guard against contaminated food and water. An appeal for graduate nurses was broadcast from Red Cross Headquarters where a shortage of trained help was reported. Thousands of sightseers jammed the downtown district.

Lights came on in a number of downtown buildings hitherto dark. All parochial and public schools in the city were still closed. Known dead numbered 62—injured, about 500. Owners of business houses in the downtown district rushed work on reconstruction.

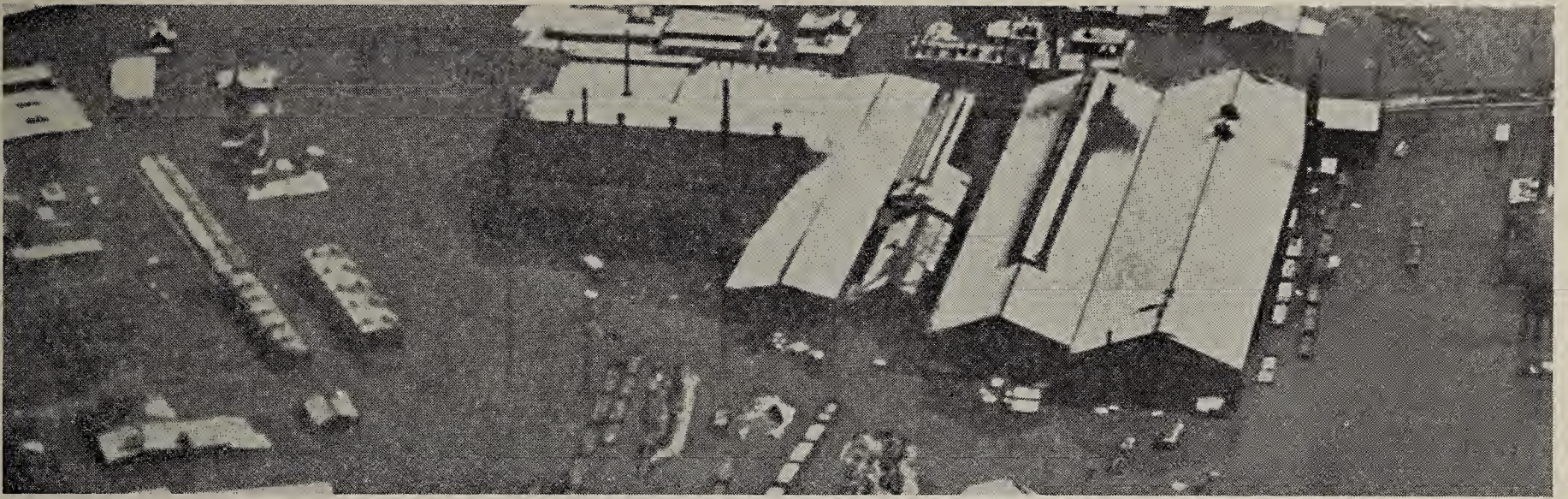
The number made homeless at Pittsburgh was estimated at 135,000.



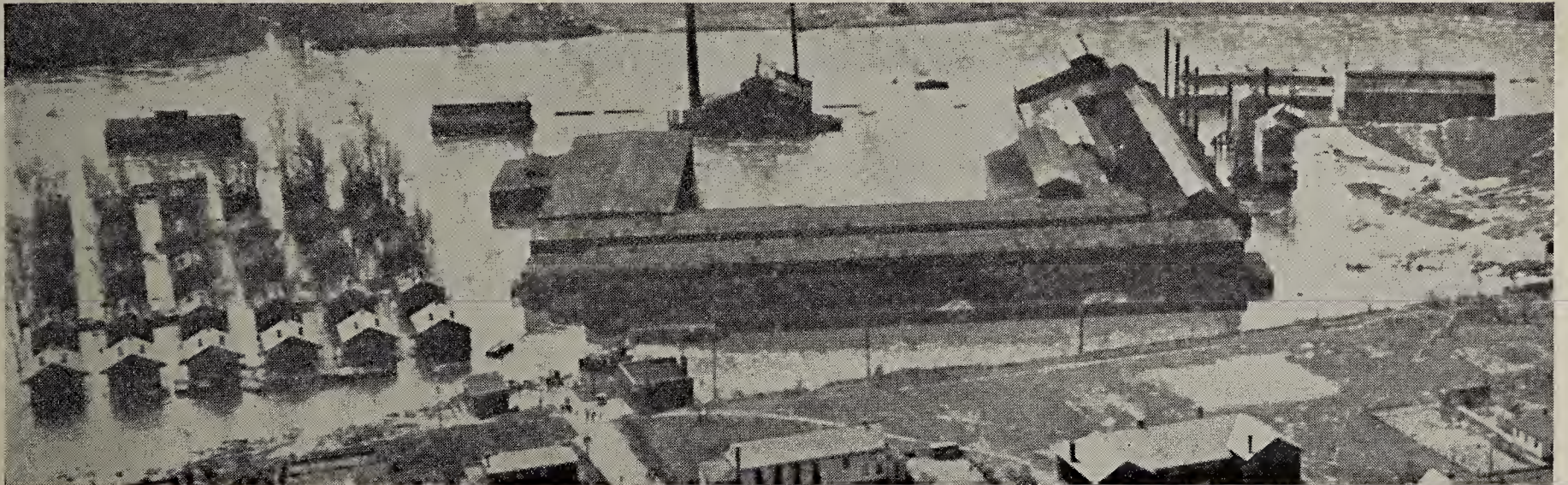


Oliver and Wood Streets showing Woolworths, Sixth and Liberty Store—Corner Fifth and Wood Streets—The Block House, Penn Ave.  
—Joseph Horne Company Store.





High water flooded this Pittsburgh industrial plant.



Pittsburgh steel plant under water along with its workers' homes.

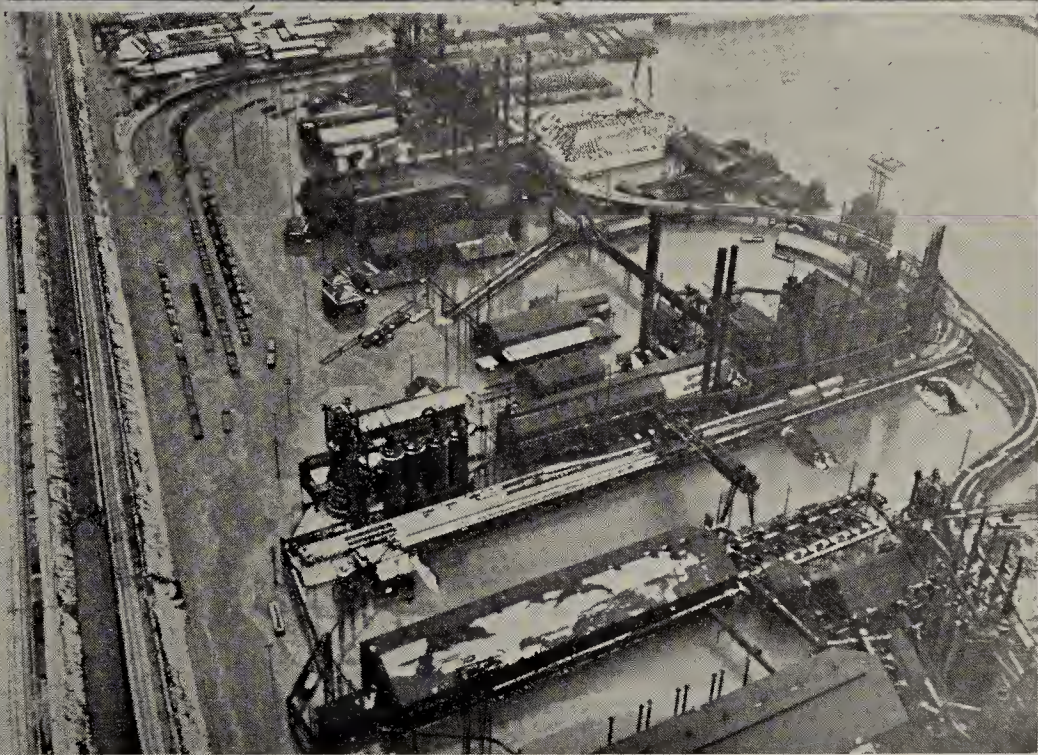




McKees Rocks Wreckage—Freak wreckage, box car and house boat washed against bridge.

105 year old Glenn Home on North Side destroyed—Flood wreckage on river bank.





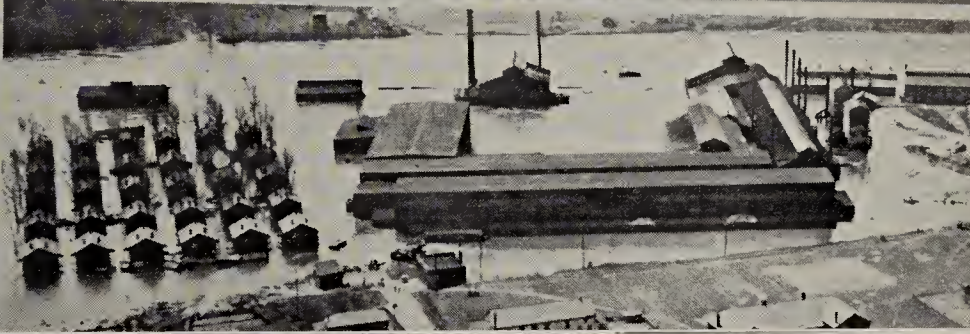
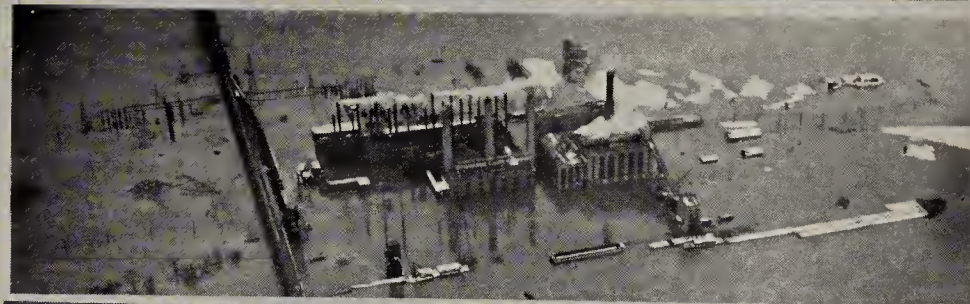
Etna during Flood with Butler Street fire in background—Ice pouring out of Allegheny River to Ohio, a 31 foot stage three weeks before the big Flood. Monongahela at right clear of ice—Waverly Oil fire during Flood—Pittsburgh Steel Mills flooded





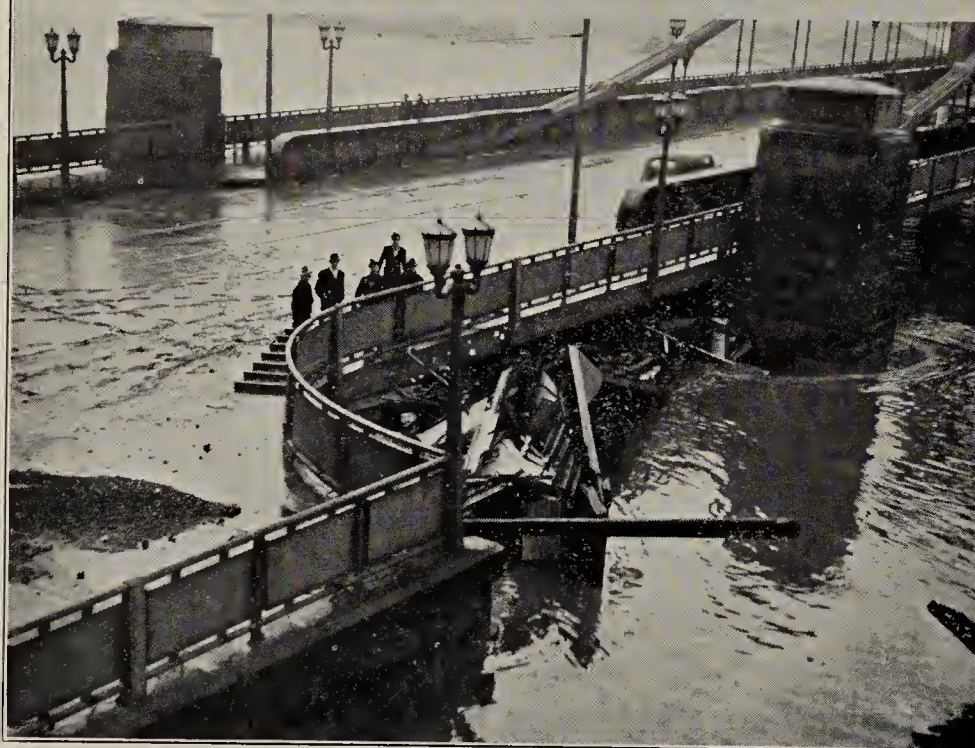
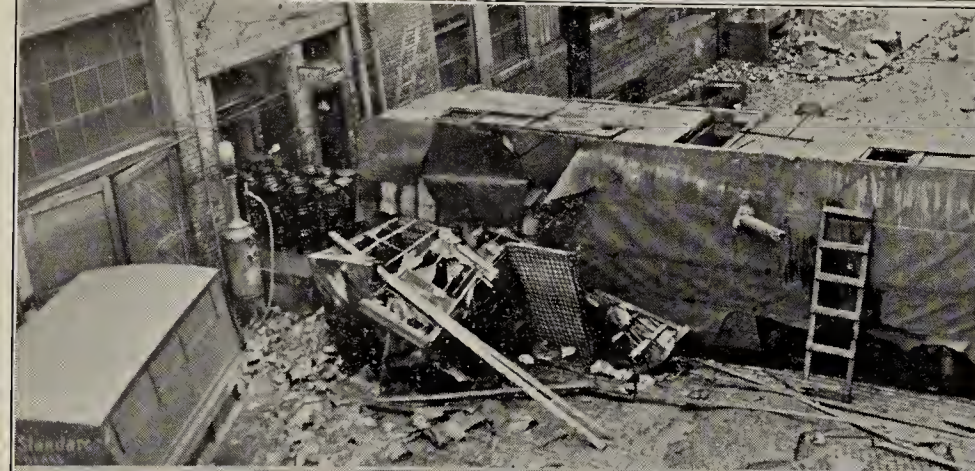
Top—Ohio River Scene; Debris at 8th & Duquesne Way; Truck turned over.  
Bottom—Wreckage washed in by the River; Interior of home wrecked in Etna; No gas but plenty of kindling.





Along the Pittsburgh water front—Sharpsburg, on the left 10 strings of cars partly submerged. McKees Rocks, James H. Reed Brunot Island, Duquesne Light Company—Pittsburgh Steel Plant.





Water Street Houseboat washed up by Flood—Debris at 6th Street Bridge—2 Flood Wreckage Scenes.





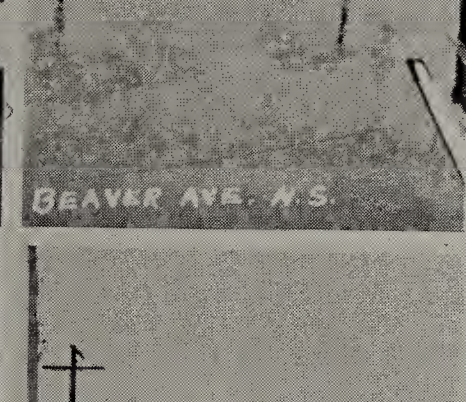
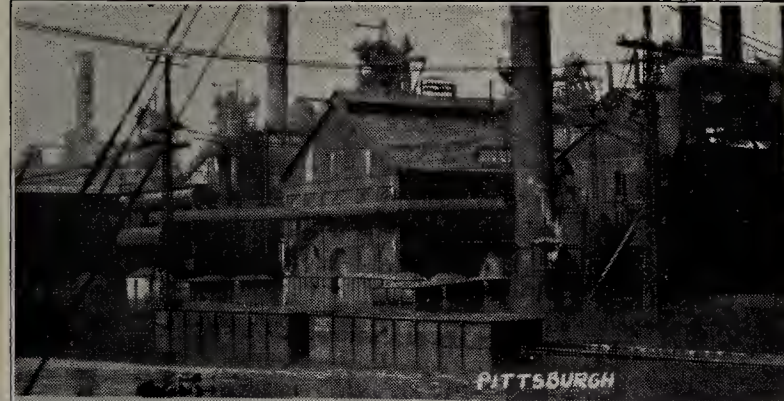
(1) Diamond Street; (2) Seventh and Liberty; (3) Diamond Street; (4) Nadine; (5) Reedsdale St., N. S.; (6) Marooned at 12th.; (7) The Point; (8) Diamond Street; (9) Gimbel's Department Store.





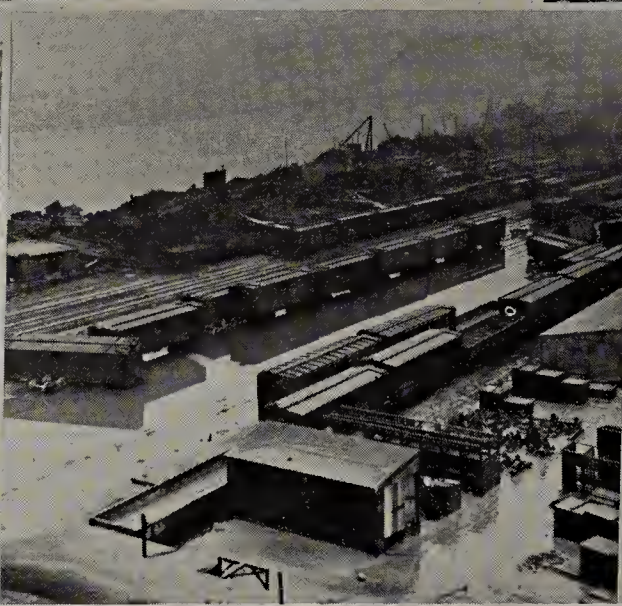
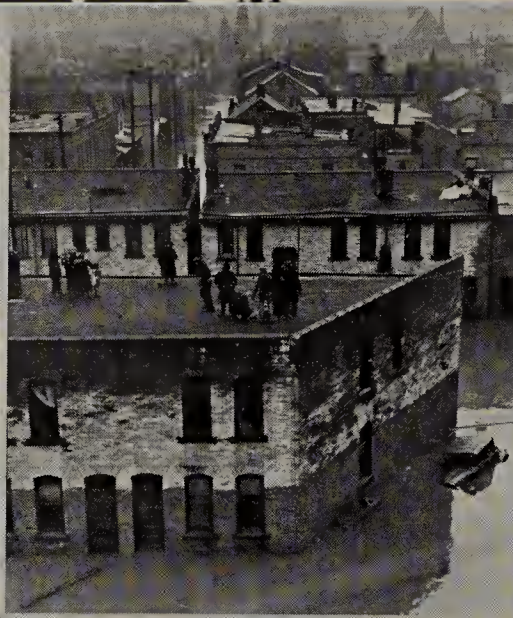
(1) Penitentiary under water; (2) Penitentiary from North Side; (3) View from Smithfield Bridge; (4) Produce Yard Scene; (5) Produce Yard Scene; (6) Produce Yard Scene.





Left—Flooded steel plant; Water Street; Oliver & Wood Streets. Center—Beaver Avenue N. S.; Rescue. Right—Federal Street; Pumping water from Jenkins Arcade; River scene.





North Side Views—Wreckage between 6th & 7th Streets; Marooned on house top; Aerial view of Point showing approach to Manchester Bridge; High water; B. & O. tracks under water; Old man Price moving belongings by boat.





Top—Soldiers on guard at McKees Rocks; Workmen using disinfectants; Soldier checking pass. Center—Fireman rescues boy from N. S. home; Soldiers enter flood zone; Police and crowd on N. S. Bottom—Fifth & Grant crowd; Clean up; 10th & Penn (Ft. Pitt Hotel on right); Fifth Avenue Scene.





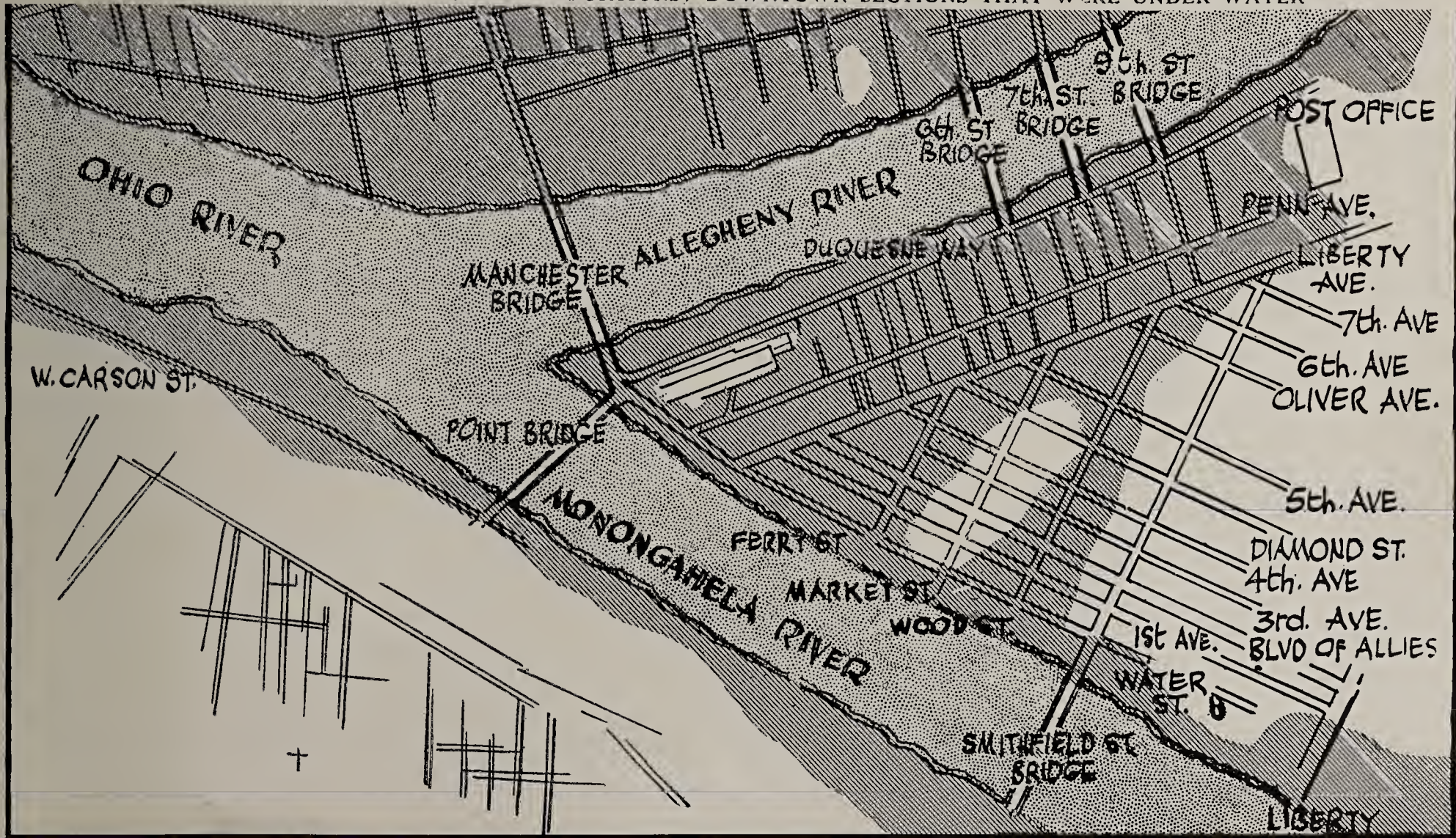
Top Row—Kiddy with mumps after rescue; Doing home work by lamp light; Twins born during the flood.  
Lower Row—Rescue boats on North Side; Completing milk delivery by boat; Snow ice box used during the flood.



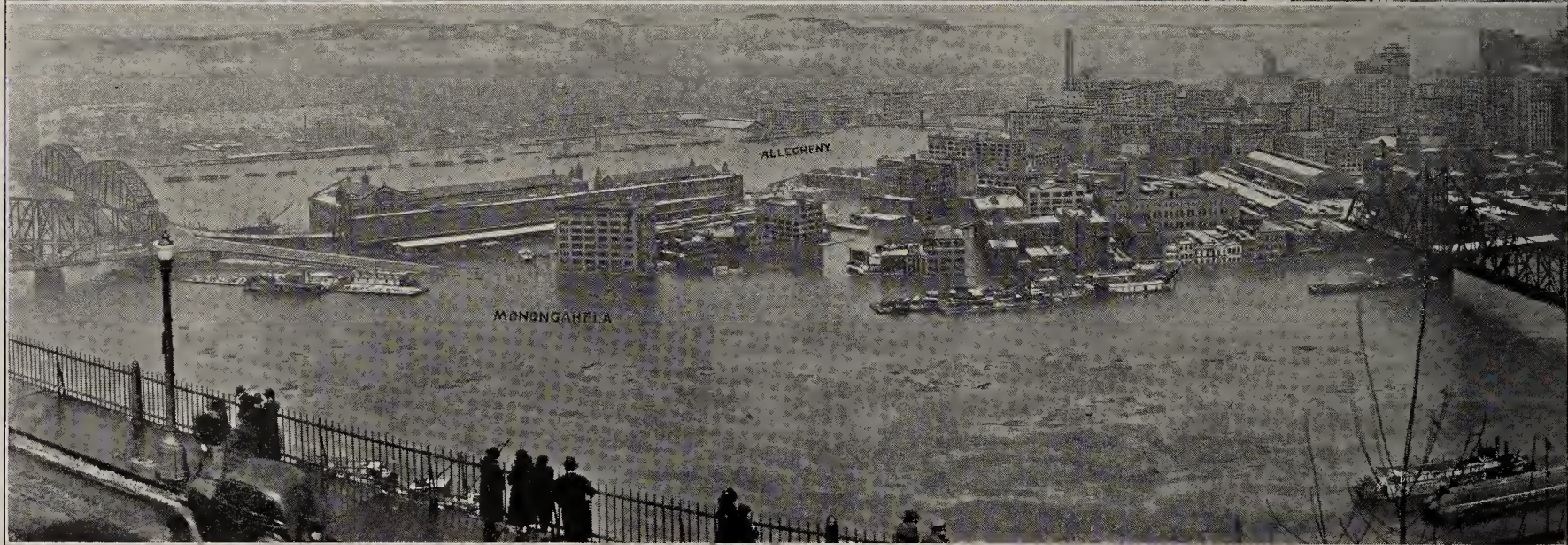
RIDGE AVE.

PT. WAYNE STATION

ARTIST'S MAP SHOWING (SHADED PORTIONS) DOWNTOWN SECTIONS THAT WERE UNDER WATER







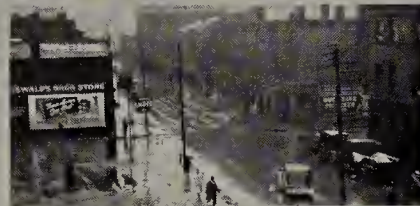
PANORAMA VIEWS FROM  
 Top view shows river at normal stage of 12 ft. Lower view shows 44 ft. of water, crest 46.2 ft. Flood





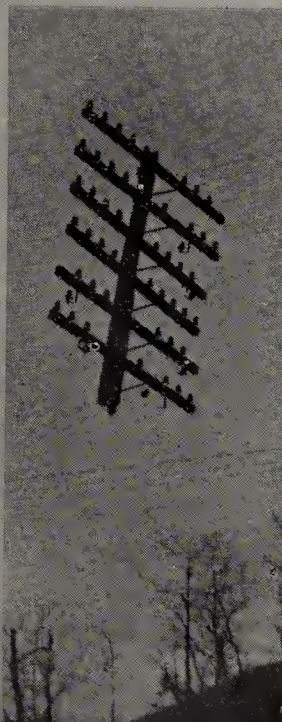
M MT. WASHINGTON  
 stage is 25 ft. On the right is the P. & L. E. Depot surrounded by water, and only tops of cars seen.





Left—Diver getting ready to enter Smithfield flooded manhole; Fifth & Smithfield gas threat. Center—Federal St.; Sandusky St.; Anderson St.; Heinz plant; Emsworth Dam destroyed; Emsworth Station. Right—Fifth & Smithfield; Collapsed house on North Side.





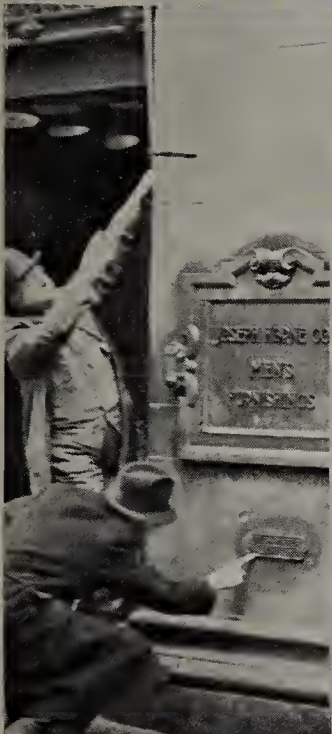
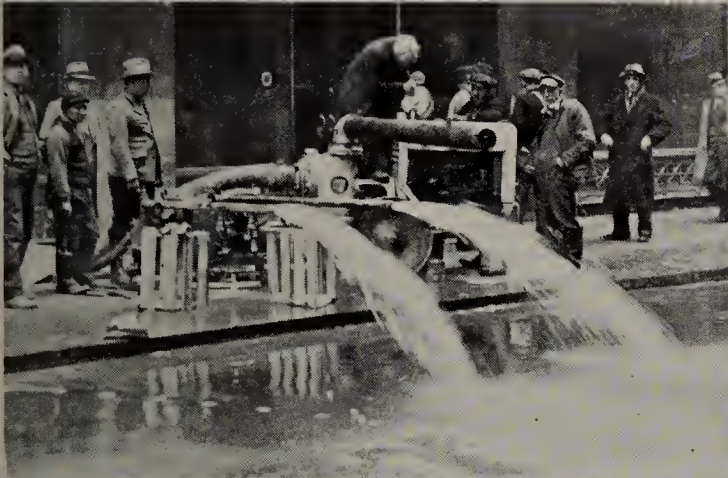
Sharpsburg blast during flood;—Helen Street McKees Rocks—Freak of the Flood  
Main Street McKees Rocks—Top of telephone pole suspended by wires at Emsworth—Emsworth Dam locks destroyed.





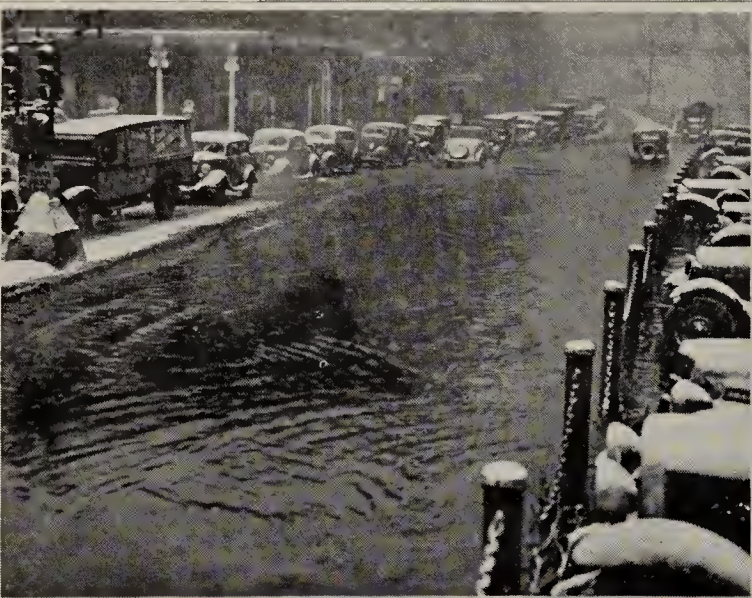
Left—3 Kiski Valley scenes. Center—2 Kiski Valley homes destroyed near Vandergrift. Right—Etna scene; Tank washed down; Kroger Warehouse.





Left—Pumping water from Jenkins Arcade basement; Reaching for 1936 flood height and pointing to 1907 flood marker on Joseph Horne's store, and store scene 6 ft. under crest. Center—Inspecting Smithfield Bridge crack; Coal barge washed ashore on N. S.; Wreckage at 16th St. Bridge. Right—North Side street scene; North Side river scene; Jack Hooper in flood zone.





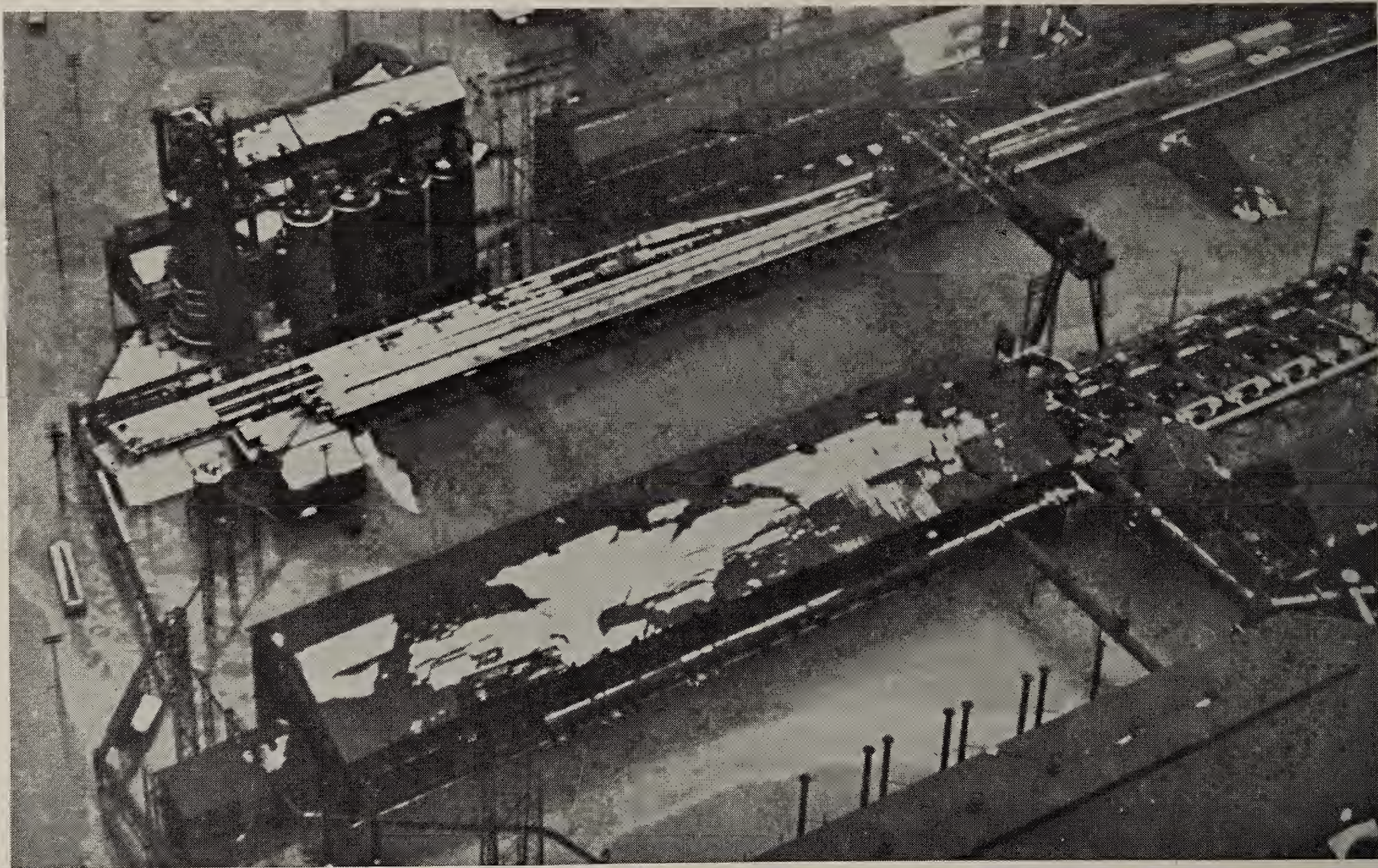
Liberty Avenue Scenes—Top: Autos in blizzard with rising water; Boulevard of Allies traffic hindered in getting away from flood (Cor. of Liberty); Cor. of 7th Avenue. Bottom: Cor. of 9th Street; Water Street; Marooned in Wurlitzer window; another water scene.





Feeding Flood helpers—Feeding victims of the Flood—Rescuers.





A Pittsburgh steel mill, idle because of the high water.





# EAST END OF McKEESPORT

(1) East End from Ohio Avenue. (2) Sightseers at foot of Market St.; water was up to iron braces on poles. (3) Scene from Highland Grove. (4) East on Fifth Avenue.

Courtesy of McKeesport Daily News.





(1) Tarentum. (2) Tarentum. (3) Wilkinsburg. (4) 6th Avenue. (5) Penn Avenue. (6) New Kensington. (7) Sutersville. (8) Hazelwood.





Johnstown Scenes—(1) Corner Sommerset and Napoleon. (2) Corner Main and Market. (3) Penn Traffic Co. at Washington. (4) Washington and Market. (5) Market St. looking toward Municipal Bldg., P. O. at right. (6) Iron St. and Penn. R. R. Sta. (7) Vine St., looking toward Market; Y. M. C. A. on right. (8) Market and Washington Sts. (9) Franklin St. Bridge.





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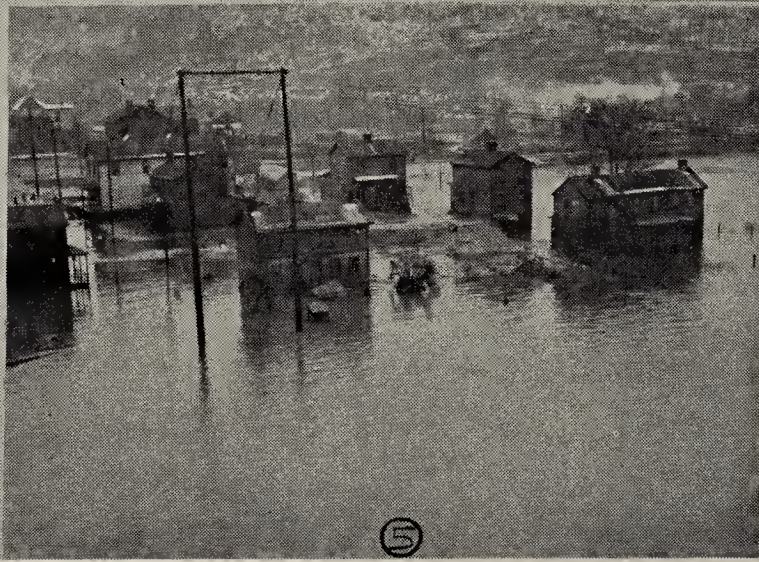
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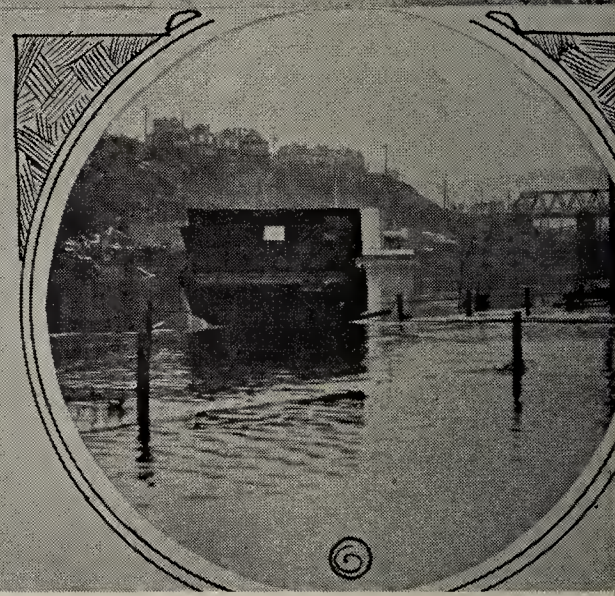
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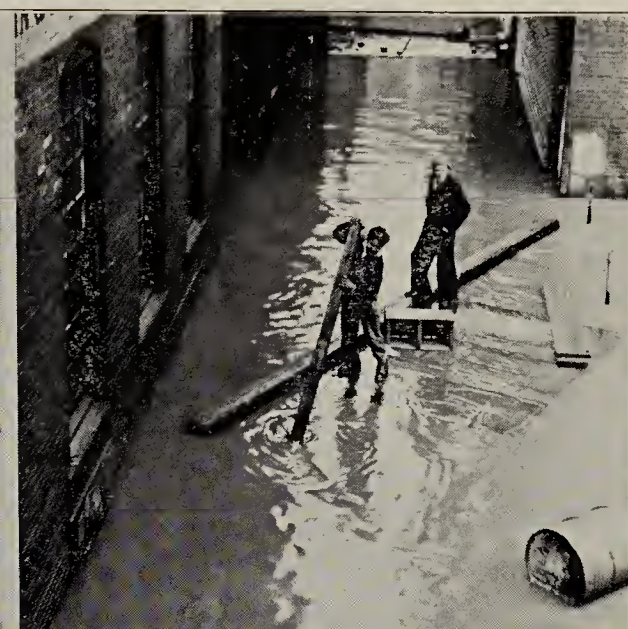
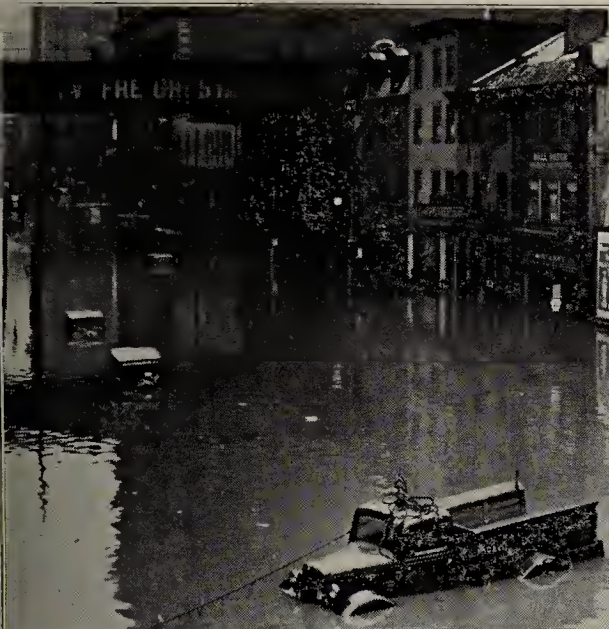


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*Courtesy of McKeesport Daily News.*

(1) Waiting for Drinking Water. (2) Second Avenue and Market Street, where Officer J. H. Sellman disappeared. (3) Drinking water trucked in. (4) Building left at Third Avenue and Market St. (5) Scene from Boston Bridge. (6) Building left on banks of Youghiogheny in Water St.





Liberty Avenue from Water Street—Safe in Produce Yard, all that is left—Boys on raft, downtown.  
Liberty & Ninth Street Scene—North Side Scene.





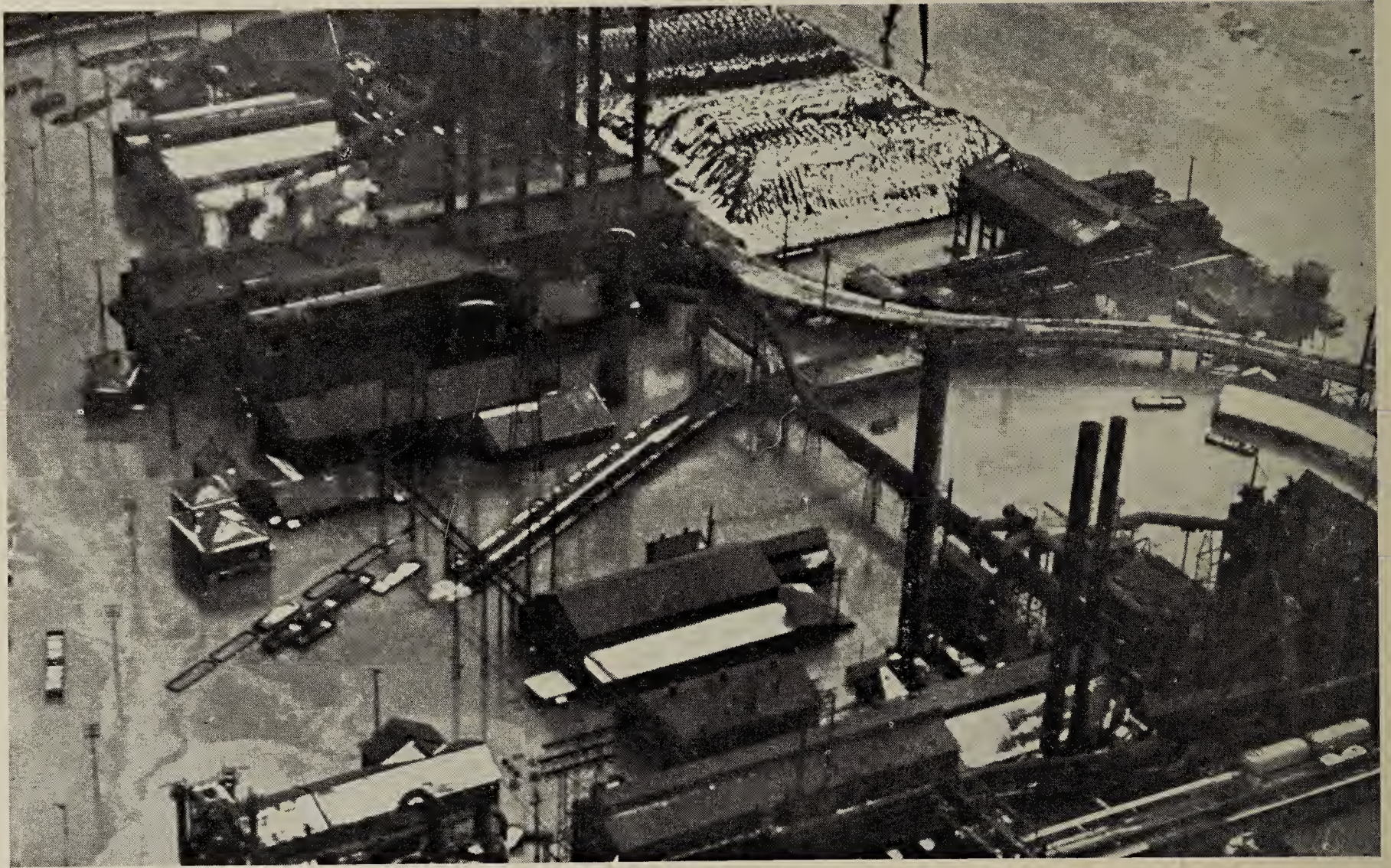
Johnstown Scenes—Aerial View of Flood and Power Plant.





(1) Removing people from their homes. (2) Corner of Ninth and Liberty Avenues. (3) Completing milk delivery by boat. (4) Housework must go on. (5) Saved from marooned auto.





Aerial view of one of Pittsburgh's steel mills—note the submerged cars.







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